patients are asked to go to the other hospitals in the City. They are not being admitted into the hospital since no proper arrangement is made. No proper study is made regarding the number of patients and treatment given to them. The Post-Graduate students are put to great hardship because there are no patients. No bed-side teaching studies are conducted.

I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister of Health and Family welfare to immediately look into the matter.

SHRI SUDHIR SAWANT (Rajapur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the Government a vital issue affecting the Konkan area of Maharashtra and Goa. As you know, Sir, this area is the most backward area in the country. It is served by only one road, by the National Highway called the Bombay-Goa Highway. We had a ferry service which was closed down three years ago. We had an air service of Vayudoot which was also stopped. The Ratnagiri Airport is the only Airport which is there in this area, which is also being dismantled. This road, the Bombay-Goa National Highway cannot be termed as a Highway in any case when you look at the appearance of it. This Highway is repaired every year. During the monsoon season the surface disintegrate because of the heavy precipitation in this area.

I would, therefore, request that the Government must now take firm action against the contractors and also allocate more resources so that the road surface is developed in such a manner that the surface disintegration is not allowed to happen every year. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seats. I have to do one after the other. You cannot just press like this. There are Members on that side also. I am saying, please take your seat.

SHRI SUDHIR GIRI (Contai): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the workers and labourers engaged in the salt-producing factories throughout the entire sea coast areas all over the country do not get wages even at the minimum scale as fixed up by the Minimum Wages Act. The labourers in many factories have to start their work even before the sun-rise and continue their work even after the sun-set with an hour's recess in the noon thereby stretching the working hours by more than twelve hours a day. We are all aware of the present hard days in the present situation of spiralling prices. It is, therefore, obvious how miserable and distressing conditions the salt-workers are living in. Labourers having at least five members of each family at an average find it really a total impossibility to live on the meagre wage of Rs. 14 or Rs. 16 per day—there remaining no work, no pay day. It is unimaginable how these salt-workers are pulling on their days of unbearable sufferings. Further, the Budget proposals have already started inflationary pressure in the market and the essential consumers' items have begun to reflect the same.

Sir under the circumstances, I would urge upon the Government, the Ministry of Industry to take initiatives immediately to bring forward legislative measures to fix up the daily minimum wages of the workers and labourers engaged in the salt-factories whether big or small and help the poor people overcome the present hardship prevailing in our country. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman-Nicobar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, during my visit to Calcutta, I had seen more than 200 Andaman bound passengers—men, women and children —who had been stranded there for the last three months. They are now staying on the footpaths of Calcutta. They are facing starvation because of non-availability of any food. These people are particularly from Andhra Pradesh, from Ranchi area of Bihar, West Ben-

gal and Orissa. They are mostly the working class people who have come from Andaman and Nicobar Island during the vacation time to see their families in the mainland. Now they are not in a position to go back. Unfortunately, the shipping ticket which necessitates these people to reach Andaman and Nicobar Island, has been withheld by the Shipping Corporation of India, Calcutta. These people are not getting their tickets. This is a very serious matter. People are facing starvation. I request the Leader of the House to kindly pass on this to the Minister of Surface Transport so that these people—on 15th, there will be a ship—are given the passage to go back to their places. I request Shri Arjun Singhji to look into the matter. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): The Jute Corporation of India was formed to procure jute directly from the growers so that the jute growers of West Bengal may get statutory minimum price fixed by the Government, if not the fair price. This was an assurance given by the first Prime Minister of India Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, after the partition of India, to the farmers of West Bengal who started growing jute in West Bangal and our country became self-sufficient in jute growing. These jute growers are now starving because of the policy of the Textiles Ministry, the policy of the Government of India not to procure jute this year. The Jute Corporation of India is not coming to the market. They are not procuring jute from any of the jute growing districts of West Bengal. Unless the Jute Corporation of India starts procuring jute immediately in West Bengal, the jute price in West Bengal will come down further and the jute growers will die. I demand a statement from the Minister of Textiles. I demand that the Jute Corporation of India should start procuring jute immediately from the jute growers of West Bengal. Unless this is done, the price which has already fallen in West Bengal, will fall down further in West Bengal, in Bihar, in Orissa and the other jute growing States of our country. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA (Cuttack): Jute growers are suffering a lot. The Government must make a statement on this point. This is a very serious problem throughout the country. This problem is there in Orissa also. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: It is a question of life and death for the forty lakh jute workers in the country. The Leader of the House is here. He should make a statement. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA: You can direct the Minister or the Leader of the House to make a statement on this issue. This is one of the very serious matters which the jute growers of Bengal, Orissa and Bihar are facing. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You have made that point. Now Shri Agnihotri to speak.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA: We want a statement from the Minister on this issue. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: This is an important point; you have made it. You sit down now. There are other Members also who must get an opportunity. You made your point; let them also make their points.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: We want a statement from the Minister. The Leader of the House is here, he should speak.

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA: The Minister can respond to this matter. Nearly 50-60 lakh jute growers are unable to sell their product. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You have made that point; now allow others to speak.